Differences over mining policy

*378. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether hon'ble Prime Minister has urged his Ministry to urgently sort out the differences between the Centre and the mineral-rich States with regard to value addition of minerals within the State boundaries and delays in the grant of concessions by the State Governments;

(b) if so, whether he has started consulting Chief Ministers of dissenting States on these issues;

(c) whether the hon'ble Prime Minister has also urged his Ministry to procure the proposals based on the Hoda Committee Report and frame a new policy; and

(d) the steps being considered to resolve the issues and also to amend the Coal Mines Act?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) The issues of instances on value addition within the State as one of the criteria for grant of mineral concession and delays at various levels in the grant of mineral concession has been brought to the notice of Government.

(b) Chief Ministers of the State Governments were invited to discuss recommendations of the High Level Committee (Hoda Committee) which included these issues in the 28th meeting of the Mineral Advisory Council held on 6th November, 2006.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Recommendations of the Hoda Committee are under consideration.

As per available information, amendments in the Coal Mines (Nationalization) Act, 1973 are under consideration of the Ministry of Coal.

Mining lease proposals from Orissa

†*379. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals regarding mining leases received from Orissa;

(b) the number of proposals sanctioned out of them;

(c) the status of other proposals; and

(d) whether Government have fixed any time limit to consider the pending proposals?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) to (c) Sixteen proposals regarding grant of mining leases have been received from the State Government of Orissa from 1.4.2003 till 12.12.2006. Out of these 7 proposals have been approved and 3 proposals have been returned to the State Government of Orissa because of various deficiencies. Some information is awaited from the State Government of Orissa in respect of remaining 3 proposals and 3 proposals have been kept in abeyance in view of the Stay Order issued by the Mines Tribunal.

(d) Decision with regard to the proposals for grant of mining lease is taken after consulting the concerned State Government, Geological Survey of India, Indian Bureau of Mines and other agencies as required, and also keeping in view the orders, if any, passed by the Tribunal/ Courts in respect of the proposal. The proposals are considered expeditiously on receipt of complete information.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.